

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A method for processing a documents including a ~~field~~ containing information in a predefined domain, the method comprising:
defining a directory of data relating to the predefined domain;
receiving from a client via a computer network ~~an image of the field~~ images of a number of fields containing the respective information;
processing the images to code the information; ~~and~~
looking up the coded information in the directory so as to check whether the information is coded correctly;
returning the checked, coded information over the network to the client; and
receiving payment from the client according to the number of the fields.

2-3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein defining the directory comprises selecting data specific to the predefined domain from one or more general databases.

5. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein receiving the images comprises receiving ~~an images~~ of alphanumeric characters in the fields.

6. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 5, wherein the documents includes a template delineating the fields, and wherein receiving the images of the characters comprises receiving the images of the characters filled into the fields and remaining after drop-out of the template from the image of the fields.

7. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 5, wherein processing the images comprises applying computerized optical character recognition (OCR) to code the characters.

8. (Original) A method according to claim 7, wherein looking up the coded information comprises selecting a preferred reading of the characters from among two or more possible readings generated by the OCR, responsive to the data in the directory.

9. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 7, wherein looking up the coded information comprises generating a confidence score, and wherein processing the images comprises passing the images to a human operator for coding when the confidence score is below a predetermined threshold.

10. (Original) A method according to claim 7, wherein looking up the coded information comprises detecting an error in the coded characters and correcting the error using the data in the directory.

11. (Original) A method according to claim 1, wherein looking up the coded information comprises detecting an error in the coded information and correcting the error using the data in the directory.

12. (Original) A method for processing forms, each form including a field that is filled in with information in a predefined domain, the method comprising:

defining a directory of data relating to the predefined domain by selecting data specific to the domain from one or more general databases;

receiving from a client via a computer network the information that is filled into the field on the forms by a plurality of users in communication with the client; and

checking whether the information is correct by looking up the information in the directory.

13. (Original) A method according to claim 12, wherein receiving the information comprises receiving coded information, and wherein checking whether the information is correct comprises checking whether the coded information is correct.

14. (Original) A method according to claim 13, wherein receiving the coded information comprises receiving coded characters generated by the client using optical character recognition (OCR).

15. (Original) A method according to claim 12, wherein receiving the information comprises receiving an image of the field, and comprising processing the image to code the information, wherein checking whether the information is correct comprises checking whether the information was coded correctly by looking up the coded information in the directory.

16. (Original) A method according to claim 12, and comprising returning the checked information over the network to the client.

17. (Original) A method according to claim 16, and comprising receiving payment from the client according to a number of the forms for which the correctness of the information in the field was checked.

18. (Original) A method according to claim 16, wherein checking whether the information is correct comprises detecting an error in the information, and comprising correcting the error using the data in the directory.

19. (Currently amended) Apparatus for processing a documents including a ~~field containing~~ information in a predefined domain, the apparatus comprising:

a memory, in which a directory of data relating to the predefined domain is stored;
and

a directory service processor, adapted to receive from a client via a computer network ~~an image of the field~~ images of a number of fields containing the respective information, to process the images to code the information, ~~and to look up the coded information in the directory so as to check whether the information is coded correctly, to return the checked, coded information over the network to the client, and to receive payment from the client according to the number of the fields.~~

20-21. (Canceled)

22. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 19, wherein the directory comprises data specific to the predefined domain, which are selected from one or more general databases.

23. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim 19, wherein the images comprises alphanumeric characters filled into the fields.

24. (Currently amended) Apparatus according to claim 23, wherein the documents includes a template delineating the fields, and wherein the characters in the images comprise the characters remaining after drop-out of the template from the images of the fields.

25. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 23, wherein the processor is adapted to apply computerized optical character recognition (OCR) to code the characters.

26. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the processor is further adapted to select a preferred reading of the characters from among two or more possible readings generated by the OCR, responsive to the data in the directory.

27. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the processor is further adapted to generate a confidence score in a reading generated by the OCR, and to pass the image to a human operator for coding when the confidence score is below a predetermined threshold.

28. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the processor is adapted to detect an error in the coded characters and to correct the error using the data in the directory.

29. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 19, wherein the processor is adapted to detect an error in the coded information and to correct the error using the data in the directory.

30. (Original) Apparatus for processing forms, each form including a field that is filled in with information in a predefined domain, the apparatus comprising:

a memory, in which a directory of data relating to the predefined domain is stored by selecting data specific to the domain from one or more general databases; and

a processor, adapted to receive from a client via a computer network the information that is filled into the field on the forms by a plurality of users in communication with the client, and to check whether the information is correct by looking up the information in the directory.

31. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 30, wherein the processor is adapted to receive coded information, and to check that the information is coded correctly.

32. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 30, wherein the processor is adapted to receive an image of the field and to process the image to code the information, wherein the processor is adapted to check whether the information was coded correctly by looking up the coded information in the directory.

33. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 30, wherein the processor is adapted to return the checked information over the network to the client.

34. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 30, wherein the processor is adapted to detect an error in the information, and to correct the error using the data in the directory.

35. (Currently amended) A computer software product for processing a documents including ~~a field containing~~ information in a predefined domain, the product comprising a computer-readable medium in which program instructions are stored, which instructions, when read by a computer, cause the computer to receive a definition of a directory of data relating to the predefined domain and, upon receiving from a client via a computer network ~~an image of the field~~ images of a number of fields containing the respective information, to process the images so as to code the information, ~~and~~ to look up the coded information in the directory so as to check whether the information is coded correctly, to return the checked, coded information over the network to the client, and to receive payment from the client according to the number of the fields.

36. (Currently amended) A product according to claim 35, wherein the images comprises alphanumeric characters filled into the fields, and wherein the instructions cause the computer to apply optical character recognition (OCR) to code the characters.

37. (Original) A computer software product for processing forms, each form including a field that is filled in with information in a predefined domain, the product comprising a computer-readable medium in which program instructions are stored, which instructions, when read by a computer, cause the computer to receive a definition of a directory of data relating to the predefined domain generated by selecting data specific to the domain from one or more general databases, and upon receiving from a client via a computer network the information that is filled into the field on the forms by a plurality of users in communication with the client, to check whether the information is correct by looking up the information in the directory.